

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions of claims in the application.

Claims 1-34. (cancelled).

35. (new) A process for metal deposition comprising:  
providing a solution comprising one or more metal activator species;  
contacting a part to be plated with the solution comprising one or more metal activator species;  
contacting the part with a solution of reducing agent capable of reducing the metal activator species; and  
metal plating the part by contact with an electroless plating solution;  
wherein the metal activator species is one or more agents chosen from silver (II), cobalt (III), ruthenium (V), (VI), (VII), (VIII), cerium (III) or (IV), iron (II) or (III), manganese (IV or higher), rhodium (IV) or vanadium (IV) or (V), and
36. (new) The process of claim 35 wherein the part is immersed in an aqueous solution comprising one or more metal activator species.
37. (new) The process of claim 36 further comprising etching the part with reactive hydroxyl species generated from water as a result of the presence of the metal activator species in the aqueous solution.
38. (new) The process of claim 35 wherein the metal activator is oxidized electrochemically.
39. (new) The process of claim 35 wherein the metal activator is selected from cobalt (III), ruthenium (V), (VI), (VII), (VIII), cerium (III) or (IV), iron (II) or (III), manganese (IV or higher), rhodium (IV) and vanadium (IV) or (V).

40. (new) The process of claim 35 wherein the metal activator is silver.
41. (new) The process of claim 35 wherein the metal activator is cobalt.
42. (new) The process of claim 35 where the part comprises an organic plastic.
43. (new) The process of claim 35 wherein the part comprises acrylonitrile butadiene styrene, polyamide, epoxy, polycarbonate, or polyetherimide, or blends thereof.